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Making Urgent Investments in LA County's Homeless Crisis Response

With winter approaching, Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Michael Antonovich urged the Board of Supervisors to consider next week investing \$15 million on programs to rapidly rehouse the homeless and prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless.

The money would come out of Los Angeles County's Homeless Prevention Initiative (HPI) fund, which started with \$50 million at the beginning of this fiscal year and gained another \$51 million last week.

"With the harsh winter months approaching, it is imperative that the County initiate investments in known (budget) gaps immediately, in order to respond to the crisis at hand," Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Antonovich said in a [motion](#) introduced during Tuesday's Board meeting.

The motion will be added to the agenda of the Board's next meeting on October 13, so the public will have at least a week to review it before a vote is taken.

In Los Angeles County, an estimated 44,000 men, women and children are homeless on any given night, sleeping on the streets or in vehicles, shelters and transitional housing programs. That's 12 percent more than in 2013 – [a dynamic and deepening crisis](#).

The Board is still weighing how to allocate the \$51 million newly added to the Homeless Prevention Initiative fund. Throughout October and November, the County is holding 18 summits among public and private stakeholders to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the homeless crisis, and a report is due in February. Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Antonovich, however, believe the Board has a moral responsibility to act sooner rather than later to invest in

proven intervention practices and fill known budget gaps in existing crisis response systems for the homeless. For instance, a major source of funds for the rapid rehousing of homeless families with kids under age 6 will be exhausted in March.

Both Supervisors also expressed alarm over money running low for programs intended to prevent families from becoming homeless in the first place; to allow individuals and families who are already in permanent housing to continue receiving supportive services; and to rapidly rehouse homeless single adults who are not military veterans.

In their motion, they sought to set aside:

- \$10 million for rapid rehousing of single adults who are not chronically homeless;
- \$3 million for rapid rehousing of homeless families with children;
- \$2 million to provide assistance to families on the brink of homelessness so that they can get back on their feet and not end up on the streets.

The motion also called for identifying continuous federal, state and other funds that could be used to pay for ongoing services in permanent supportive housing projects.

“The recommendations build on existing initiatives and priorities that were previously approved by the Board,” Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Antonovich said in their motion. “These strategies have been proven to prevent and end homelessness and would allow the County to make a more immediate and substantive impact in areas with the highest need, while the interim CEO completes the strategic planning process to address these issues.”

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